CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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FINAL RECORD OF THE SEVEN HUNDRED AND NINETIETH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 19 March 1998, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Al-Hussami (Syrian Arab Republic)

GE.98-60803 (E)

The PRESIDENT (translated from Arabic): I declare open the 790th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

I should like at the outset, on behalf of us all, to extend a warm welcome to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan, His Excellency Mr. Gohar Ayub Khan, who will be addressing the Conference today. I am sure that we all appreciate this further demonstration of the high importance attached by his Government to our deliberations, and of the continued commitment on the part of the Government of Pakistan to the multilateral approach to disarmament.

It also gives me great pleasure to welcome amongst us today Ambassador Jayantha Dhanapala, who as you know was recently appointed Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs. Ambassador Dhanapala needs no introduction. He is known to most of us and he is a friend of many of us. He has had a long and illustrious association with the cause of disarmament. Prior to his current appointment, Ambassador Dhanapala was Diplomat-in-Residence at the Center for Nonproliferation Studies of the Monterey Institute of International Studies in California. He also served as a member of the Canberra Commission on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons in 1996. In 1995, he successfully steered the Review and Extension Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. From 1984 to 1987 he was the Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to the United Nations in Geneva and was the Sri Lankan representative to the Conference on Disarmament. Ambassador Dhanapala presided over the Conference in April 1984. In the period between 1987 and 1992 Ambassador Dhanapala headed and revitalized the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research. As you are also aware, in recognition of his expertise in disarmament matters and his diplomatic skills the Secretary-General of the United Nations very recently appointed him as Commissioner of UNSCOM with responsibility for the Special Group that will conduct entries into Presidential sites in Iraq under the Memorandum of Understanding agreed during his mission to Baghdad and subsequently endorsed by the Security Council. As I said, all this is in firm recognition of his wide experience in matters of disarmament and his diplomatic skills. We are honoured that Ambassador Dhanapala has found it possible to pay a visit to the Conference on Disarmament as soon as he was appointed as Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, and despite his very heavy schedule. His presence here amongst us today is a further testimony to his personal interest in our common endeavours and the commitment of his Department to support for our Conference.

As you are aware, the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea, Ambassador Joun Yung Sun, very recently relinquished his post, having been called to new and important responsibilities as Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade in Seoul by his Government. We will all remember the skilful way in which he presided over the Conference at the beginning of its 1997 session. I should like, on behalf of all of us, to request his delegation to transmit to Ambassador Sun our very best wishes for his future success and happiness.

(The President)

Besides his Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan, I also have on my list of speakers for today the representative of Canada. However, before giving them the floor, I should like to make a few opening remarks at the start of the presidency of the Syrian Arab Republic, our presidency of the Conference on Disarmament.

I am honoured on behalf of my country for the first time to assume the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. Syria has always been convinced of the important role that could be played by this Conference in matters of disarmament; therefore Syria submitted its candidature for membership and has been keen, since it was accepted as a member of the Conference, to participate effectively in this international effort and to support this role.

You are aware of the activities that have taken place in this session from its beginning; the start was strong and optimistic, and there was a common will to activate this Conference because the feeling was general that this activation of the Conference had become an absolute necessity. You have translated this will and this feeling into different forms of action, starting with the overwhelming approval of the agenda that was submitted by Ambassador Norberg after his consultations with you. Then you submitted written proposals on a number of the agenda items. All those are important proposals and are still being studied by the Conference because they envisage the mechanisms that could be established by this Conference. It is obvious that the activation of this Conference cannot take place without the necessary mechanisms.

The efforts that were made by my predecessor Ambassador Hofer deserve appreciation and admiration, because he identified the common points in your ideas and proposals and formulated them in a paper which enjoyed the widest possible degree of consensus and agreement. This paper constitutes an approach to a comprehensive work programme for the 1998 session. In my view this is a very creative effort that could not have been attained without the great efficiency of Ambassador Norberg and his sincere determination to serve this Conference.

I wished to review the progress that has been achieved, although I know that you are well aware of it, not only to pay tribute to my two predecessors, Ambassadors Norberg and Hofer, but also to urge you to appreciate the value of the effort that you have been making for more than two months and to recognize the damage that we would all incur if we disregarded the achievements that we have made so far. I am aware that the totality of the proposals that have been submitted to you in our past session fell short of meeting the concerns of a number amongst you, yet we are now in a decisive stage of this session, and it is essential for us to face ourselves openly.

This Conference is you, and if you want this Conference to achieve progress in its work you will find me there, always objective and transparent. Moreover, I will spare no effort for this to be attained. I urge you to redouble your efforts in order to make this substantive leap because we are

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only one step away from finalizing a key document that would offer more and more convincing reasons to demonstrate that this Conference is alive and effective, and that its vital role is indispensable.

I now have pleasure in inviting the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan, His Excellency Mr. Gohar Ayub Khan, to address the Conference.

Mr. KHAN (Pakistan): I welcome this opportunity to address the Conference on Disarmament (CD). It is particularly auspicious that I do so under the presidency of the representative of the fraternal Syrian Arab Republic. I am confident that under your dynamic leadership, Sir, this Conference will reach a positive conclusion to the painstaking process of consultations initiated by your two predecessors, the Ambassadors of Sweden and Switzerland. It is certainly high time that the Conference was enabled to embark on substantive work on at least a few issues, even if these are not considered to be of the highest priority.

Pakistan attaches great importance to the work of the Conference on Disarmament. It is a unique and invaluable instrument for the promotion of international peace and security through negotiated arms control and disarmament agreements. The CD has many achievements to its credit - the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and, most recently, the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).

We all welcomed the entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention last year. Pakistan has never had a chemical weapons programme, and stated so in 1992 whilst signing an agreement with India. We ratified the Convention with the same confidence. The entry into force of the CWC, however, led to the unpleasant revelation of an active chemical weapons programme and the stockpiles of our eastern neighbour. Our concern is twofold: first, these chemical weapons pose a direct threat to our security and thus need to be destroyed as soon as possible; second, this incident confirms that Pakistan cannot derive confidence even from the solemn and signed declarations of our neighbour, such as the 1992 India-Pakistan Joint Declaration, that neither side possessed chemical weapons. This makes our task of promoting regional and global peace and arms control more difficult.

Pakistan is also participating actively in the ongoing Geneva negotiations to strengthen the Biological Weapons Convention. This is a complex undertaking. The positions on key issues have now been clearly articulated. Negotiations can be facilitated by a sincere endeavour to promote genuine consensus on these key issues which are reflected in the "rolling text". The Ad Hoc Group on BWC has an already defined mandate. The Fourth Review Conference has provided the necessary guidance regarding a realistic time-frame for the conclusion of its work. Artificial deadlines should be avoided. The temptation to impose positions espoused by some through alternate texts will also prove counter-productive.

For the past year and a half, the Conference on Disarmament has faced a stalemate in selecting the next issue for multilateral negotiation. In part,

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this reflects an erosion of the mutual trust among CD members, an erosion attributable to the unilateral methods utilized to secure the NPT's indefinite extension and the CTBT's adoption by the General Assembly. It would be even worse if this stalemate reinforces the trend of seeking arms control agreements in other forums, notwithstanding the absence of general consensus or participation by all those whose security interests are affected.

Beneath the manifestations of unilateralism and pulpit diplomacy, some in the third world see a more disturbing design - the objective of perpetuating an unequal world security order, an order where some States enjoy total security and others total insecurity, an order where some are free to develop, build, deploy and use any weapon, while others are prevented from acquiring the means for self-defence, where some can possess, refine and even consider using nuclear weapons while seeking to impose non-proliferation on others, even through the use of force.

It is quite natural that the smaller and weaker States, those which have no awesome weapons, nor the protection of alliances and umbrellas, should seek to level the playing field by promoting nuclear disarmament, especially now that chemical and biological weapons have been prohibited.

The danger posed by nuclear weapons is clear and present. It is not confined to the problem of "loose nukes" or nuclear terrorism, although these threats also need to be seriously addressed. The principal danger arises from the continued possession and possible use of nuclear weapons by some of the nuclear-weapon States.

The following are some sobering thoughts: Even if START II and START III are concluded, ratified and implemented, the nuclear-weapons arsenals of the two major Powers will be larger than at the time of the Cuban missile crisis. If the world worried about the stability of bipolar nuclear deterrence during the cold war, it should have sleepless nights about the uncertainty of multipolar nuclear deterrence between five nuclear Powers and perhaps some additional nuclear-capable States. Our concerns have hardly been eased by the fact that now four of the five nuclear Powers espouse the doctrine of the first use of nuclear weapons against nuclear or conventional threats to their security. The development and deployment of anti-ballistic missile systems and theatre missile defences could also seriously affect the stability of nuclear deterrence and possibly provoke another round of vertical proliferation. The new nuclear doctrines contemplating the actual use of nuclear weapons - even against non-nuclear-weapon States - and matched by the refinement of nuclear designs for this purpose could lead to a nuclear disaster. Such doctrines could also destroy the consensus against nuclear proliferation.

In short, the nuclear nightmare is not over. The imposition of global non-proliferation is not a sufficient answer to avoiding a nuclear nightmare. For the peoples of the world, nuclear disarmament, and the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons, is the only answer. This goal must remain the

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highest priority of the international community. This Conference is required to play a central role in realizing the vital objectives of nuclear disarmament.

When nuclear weapons threaten the security of all States and affect the destiny of all peoples, how can it be argued that nuclear disarmament is the business of only two or five nuclear Powers? If possession of nuclear assets is the criterion for participation, the CTBT need not have been negotiated in the CD. Nor need the fissile materials convention be proposed for negotiation in this body. In any event, there are reportedly more than 20 countries with the potential to build nuclear weapons. It would not be wise or logical to exclude them from negotiations which seek the progressive reduction and eventual elimination of nuclear weapons.

There are several measures for nuclear disarmament which can be negotiated in the CD, if there is a will to do so. A group of 26 countries has suggested a specific mandate for negotiations on nuclear disarmament in three working groups under an ad hoc committee. This proposal envisages, as a first step, a legally binding international agreement committing all States to the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. A simple and short treaty could be approved very soon if the political will exists. My delegation is circulating a working paper which illustrates the possible provisions of such a treaty.

Secondly, the proposal envisages the commencement, in a second working group, of negotiations on a programme for the progressive and complete elimination of nuclear weapons. The draft programme contained in document CD/1419 proposed by 28 CD member States is a good basis for negotiations. It should be made clear that we are seeking in this process to identify nuclear disarmament measures, their sequence and the approximate timing for their realization. We are not pressing for actual negotiations of specific disarmament measures. Such negotiations will have to be conducted through the appropriate modalities - bilateral, plurilateral, regional or multilateral.

The group's proposal also envisages negotiations in a third working group on a fissile materials convention. Pakistan is prepared to commence work on a fissile materials convention with a mandate which reflects the Shannon report and the concerns expressed by all countries. If it is to be acceptable, the fissile materials treaty must be equitable. It will not be so if it does not address the problems created by unequal stockpiles of fissile materials, including in our region.

Since we initiated and chaired the Conference of Non-Nuclear-Weapon States in 1968, Pakistan has been in the forefront of efforts to secure unconditional and legally binding guarantees to non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. This endeavour has seen only partial and unsatisfactory results, including as a result of the earlier deliberations in this Conference.

The entire concept of negative security assurances has now been called into question by the new doctrines which envisage the actual use of nuclear

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weapons against non-nuclear States, even in response to the use or threat of use of non-nuclear weapons. Such doctrines are morally unacceptable. According to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice (ICJ), these doctrines contravene international law. They violate the commitments made by some nuclear-weapon States under Security Council resolutions 255 and 984, as well as under the protocols to various nuclear-weapon-free-zone treaties.

It is, therefore, timely for this Conference to re-establish the Ad Hoc Committee on negative security assurances. The work of this Committee should enable us to collectively clarify the new doctrines for nuclear deterrence and nuclear use propounded by certain States and alliance systems. Our aim is to conclude a binding international agreement. The Ad Hoc Committee could also examine whether some nuclear confidence-building measures (CBMs) could be agreed to reassure the non-nuclear-weapon States - for example, a commitment against nuclear targeting of non-nuclear-weapon States, and a disavowal of the recently propounded doctrines of possible nuclear use against non-nuclear States.

Twenty-seven years ago, the world felt reassured that anti-ballistic missile (ABM) systems had been for ever excluded from the nuclear calculus. The exceptions which have been recently agreed to allow ABM systems against medium- and shorter-range missiles could possibly open a nuclear Pandora's box. The development of ABM systems and theatre missile defences could seriously erode nuclear stability and provoke a new nuclear and missile race among the nuclear Powers and perhaps other States. Pakistan suggests that, as a first step, the Conference on Disarmament should establish a working group to clarify the legal and technological developments in this field and their possible implications for the maintenance of nuclear stability. Following this, the CD could consider negotiations for an international agreement to prohibit or restrict ABM and theatre missile defense systems.

While the development of technology cannot be contained, its application for military purposes can be restricted through collectively negotiated measures. Outer space is an environment from which nuclear weapons have already been prohibited. We must ensure that all kinds of weapons and military activities are excluded from outer space. Indeed, all war should be outlawed in outer space. The present moment in history, when no Power is overtly seeking to militarize outer space, offers a window of opportunity to negotiate a legally binding agreement for the preservation of outer space for peaceful purposes. Pakistan hopes an ad hoc committee will be established by the CD soon to negotiate such an agreement.

Pakistan agrees with those who argue that the CD must also address conventional weapons - not only to ensure "balance" but because this is essential to preserve international peace and security. Pakistan suggests that the CD should establish an ad hoc committee on conventional arms control and disarmament. This committee should adopt a comprehensive approach and, like the proposed ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament, it should establish three working groups to address the three major components of the problem posed by conventional weapons today.

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The first working group should seek to arrest the increasing lethality and sophistication of conventional weapons which increase suffering and, equally important, further intensify the concentration of destructive power in the hands of a few militarily and technologically advanced Powers. National and international control measures for arresting and eventually prohibiting the development of such advanced lethal weapons should be evolved in the working group.

A second working group should undertake measures to prevent the creation of serious arms imbalances in regions of tension and conflict. A first step could be the formulation of a framework for conventional disarmament and arms control at the regional and subregional levels. This conference has been asked repeatedly to undertake this task by the United Nations General Assembly. Such a framework would, we trust, reflect such principles as the following: none of the potential adversaries should be capable of prevailing in a military attack launched by surprise; equilibrium and a rough parity in defence capabilities should exist between potential adversaries, in qualitative and quantitative terms; and there should be no significant disparity in any of the areas of convention defence - land, air or naval forces.

Subsequently, once a framework has been evolved, consideration could be given to the creation of negotiating groups devoted to promoting balanced arms control and disarmament in specific regions of tension.

A third working group on conventional weapons could take up the issue of the transfer of armaments, including small arms. As a first step, there is a need to restrain such transfers to regions where serious arms imbalances already exist, to countries in the throes of civil war - such as Afghanistan, where an arms embargo should be imposed at the borders and airfields - and to criminals and terrorists. Naturally, such measures should be without prejudice to the legitimate right of States to self-defence and of peoples under colonial and foreign domination to struggle by all possible means for their right to self-determination.

Pakistan's positions on all disarmament issues are, naturally, responsive to our challenging security environment. We are obliged to content with the great Power ambitions and aggressive proclivities of our eastern neighbour, which has thrice thrust war upon Pakistan.

No responsible government in Islamabad can ignore the following realities: due to the non-implementation of Security Council resolutions, a brutal eight-year conflict has been under way in occupied Jammu and Kashmir between the Kashmiris and a foreign occupation force of over 600,000; an average of 2,200 ceasefire violations take place each year, along the Line of Control in Kashmir, and daily firing on the Siachen Glacier; two large armies face each other eyeball to eyeball, along the border. This is the Line of Control. This is the world's major flashpoint; virtually all of our neighbour's military assets - a 1.2-million-man army, over 500 aircraft and another 200 in reserve, a naval flotilla, a blue-water navy with carriers - are deployed against Pakistan; the serial production and deployment of the

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nuclear-capable Prithvi, aimed specifically at Pakistan, has commenced. It may soon be followed by the medium-range Agni missile; the on-going acquisition by our neighbour of a large number of advanced aircraft, anti-missile systems and other armaments, despite the absence of any real threat to its security.

Meanwhile, Pakistan has been subjected to unjust embargoes and sanctions, severely eroding our defence capabilities and creating the military possibility of aggression. Pakistan is obliged to redress this asymmetry in order to deter aggression. No one should doubt our ability and determination to deliver a swift and telling response to any aggression or adventurism against Pakistan.

Sadly, the world awakens to the clear and present dangers in South Asia only when Pakistan is obliged to respond to escalatory steps initiated by our neighbour. This is yet another reflection of the discrimination to which Pakistan has been subjected for almost 25 years, since our neighbour's nuclear explosion at Pokharan. Recent public utterances and pronouncements by the BJP President, and also now in their manifesto, that India will "go nuclear" and acquire and develop nuclear weapons should evoke global concern. South Asia may be pushed into a dangerous arms race.

The international community should understand that Pakistan does not wish to expend its scarce resources on a conventional or a nuclear arms race. As Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has said, Pakistan "strives for peace and stability in the region". He took the initiative to open a comprehensive dialogue with India. We hope this will be sustained with the new Indian Government, which, we hope, will be agreeable to seriously negotiate to resolve the "core" issue of Kashmir. Besides Kashmir, the agenda also includes an item on "Peace and security". Through a dialogue under this item, Pakistan is prepared to evolve agreement for mutual and equal restraint with India in the conventional, missile and nuclear fields. But we will not accept one-sided or unilateral constraints on our ability to deter aggression.

The peoples of South Asia cannot be denied their basic social needs: clean drinking water, sanitation, sewerage, roads, schools for girls and boys, hospitals, telecommunications, electrification and employment. We cannot meet these needs if we continue to spend our precious resources on armaments.

The world community can help us to achieve the goal of peace and security in South Asia. Those who wish to sell arms to our neighbour while denying these to Pakistan should reconsider. Those who sell our neighbour new weapons systems must know that we will be obliged to respond to the escalation of the military threat posed to Pakistan by these weapons. It is not by adopting double standards, not by pampering a truculent Power while penalizing an accommodating friend, that the incentives can be created for equitable arms control or peace in South Asia.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Arabic): I thank His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan for his important statement and for the kind words addressed to me. I now give the floor to the representative of Canada, Ambassador Moher.

Mr. MOHER (Canada): Let me begin by expressing what is a traditional, but certainly sincerely felt, welcome to you, Sir, as our new President and to emphasize our desire and willingness to work forward with you to advance the work of this Conference. The effort, or the desire, of the Canadian delegation is very clearly to work with you and to build on the very significant contributions made by your predecessors, both Ambassador Hofer of Switzerland and Ambassador Norberg of Sweden. It is, of course, always an honour for a Canadian intervention to take place after a Pakistani intervention, and certainly one following that by Pakistan's Foreign Minister Khan here this morning.

Canada has had an opportunity this last week to reflect on the developments of the past few weeks in this body. That reflection has included reading how our activities, Canada's activities, and others' here are perceived, both in this room and elsewhere. We find it interesting that, at least from some reports that we have read, there continues to be a continuing misunderstanding of the Canadian position. One such comment was captured by a quotation from Kipling, passed to us by a friend, concerning the advice given by a Norman to his son: "But when he says that's not plain dealing, then beware of the Saxon, my son". Well, Canada is interested in "plain dealing", and I am not a Saxon, but a Canadian! Therefore, as part of our ongoing effort to ensure clarity, and building on our statements of 22 January and 26 February, we are setting out here this morning some reflections, and to show that the quality of mercy is not foreign to Canada, I will not read the full statement that is prepared and is being circulated, and will move on to the latter part of that statement. I do encourage those of you who are struggling with insomnia that you may wish to read the three pages that I will not bore you with here this morning.

With regard to agenda item 1, as it relates to nuclear disarmament, except a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT), I continue to point out; agenda item 3, as it relates to outer space; agenda item 6, as it relates to anti-personnel landmines (APLs), and agenda item 7, as it relates to transparency in armaments (TIA), specific proposals are before this Conference. In each case there is no immediate agreement on what this Conference can usefully and productively proceed to do. Thus, in each case, the draft proposals before us have in one way or another dealt with these realities by proposing the use of a special coordinator's process to "seek the views of its members on the most appropriate way to deal with the questions related to" the agenda item in question. Canada, as the earlier part of this statement indicates, agrees to proceeding along those lines.

This brings us to the question of negative security assurances. Now Canada acknowledges that there has been some pressure - how widespread, quite frankly, we do not know - for the re-establishment of an ad hoc committee on negative security assurances (NSAs) with the pre-existing mandate. We have

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questioned, in public and in private, what such an ad hoc committee might reasonably be expected to accomplish. In our view, there is a divergence of views on the answers to this question. Accordingly, and consistent with this Conference's treatment of other issues, we have suggested that a special coordinator might be appointed to explore the possibility of some agreed activity in this field. Our proposal has been ignored.

We ask ourselves: "Why?" We are certain that it is not for short-term, window-dressing objectives! We hope it is not to provide the basis for an argument that, since the CD is working on NSAs, it is indeed addressing nuclear issues, thereby camouflaging the reality that we are not addressing either nuclear disarmament or FMCT! That is certainly not a perspective we share.

To the delegations which have been most outspoken in advocating this initiative, we have asked for some clarification; if one or more of those delegations has a creative and compelling initiative which it thinks that the CD might usefully explore, it would be useful to hear something of this idea before committing ourselves to the establishment of a subsidiary body.

Thus, Canada's basic question of 26 February, which we have been advancing formally and informally since last November without hearing a response, remains: "Who is to give what, to whom and how?" As noted earlier, we ask this question elsewhere, as well as in the CD. We note that one delegation has scorned this question as being too cryptic. If so, we apologize, and will expand upon our earlier comments succinctly here today. So let me take the concept of "Who?"

Among other steps in looking at this question, Canada has reviewed the Ad Hoc Committee report of 1994, CD/1275, of 30 August of that year. In that report, each of the P5 felt the need to make specific statements on their positions. Since then, we have had further P5 statements, and then United Nations Security Council resolution 984 of 1995. In 1994, the Western Group also had a formal statement of positions, and so did other specific delegations. There are several initial questions which occur to us: Has there been a change in the collective P5 position (per the Russian Federation's suggestion in 1994) or in individual P5 positions since that time? Are the P5 prepared, in principle, to move beyond those positions? Does China, for example, continue to see a P5 agreement on no first use as the answer? (We note from Ambassador Li's statement on nuclear issues that this may be the case.) Has the United Kingdom changed its views on negative security assurances scope and applicability? Does France maintain its "three elements" of its 1994 statement? Our reading of the National Security Blueprint of the Russian Federation, published in December 1997, indicates that Russian policy remains doubtful on this concept. Do the P5 continue to see negative security assurances as directly linked to commitments under the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)? Is any one of the P5 prepared "to expand the role of NSAs", so as to cover all weapons-of-mass-destruction scenarios? These are all questions that we have had absolutely no informal discussion on.

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And beyond the P5, how do we propose to take into account those States in the CD which, for their own considered reasons, have decided upon a position of "nuclear ambiguity"? Do they propose to provide NSAs? Do they propose to receive NSAs? Do they propose to do so via the CD? To others? How does this concept apply in that context?

We have noted the comments here this morning by the distinguished Foreign Minister of Pakistan. We respect that those comments have been put before us, and we certainly think that they should be explored.

Moreover, has the Western Group itself changed its position? We might not have been at a meeting where this took place, but we are not aware of any move in that direction. We leave others to address their more particular concerns, regional and/or global.

If I turn to the question "What?", this sub-question refers specifically to the nature and scope of any NSAs. We could expand thereon, but beyond highlighting its difficulties, we leave this aspect to possible future discussion.

Now, to whom would NSAs apply? We have already referred to the NPT dimension. In other words, do only NPT non-nuclear-weapon States qualify? Or do non-nuclear-weapon NPT States parties "in good standing" qualify? Or NPT non-nuclear-weapon States not members of any security alliance, with or without a nuclear-weapon State member? Other categories can easily be defined. This is obviously a rather complex sub-question, but we think a preliminary exchange on this would greatly clarify what, if anything, we might try to achieve.

The final question was: how are these NSAs to be captured? What arrangements are we talking about? A multilaterally negotiated legally binding treaty? Or some other objective or mechanism?

Now we recognize that these are all highly complex issues to which we, Canada, obviously did not and do not seek comprehensive or specific answers, even before negotiations begin in an ad hoc committee. But we do consider it reasonable to ask whether there is any real prospect of substantive work being done.

We note that the Ad Hoc Committee of 1994 met in 16 meetings with absolutely no consensus emerging (not even a so-called "technical" consensus!).

We also have taken careful note of a recent statement in the NPT context by a distinguished representative of the United States of America: "We understand the importance placed by many NPT non-nuclear-weapon States on the achievement of a global NSA treaty. However, candidly, there is not now enough common ground among the key countries on which to base the negotiation of such a treaty. Furthermore, significant progress has been and is being made on addressing the legitimate security concerns of NPT non-nuclear-weapon States through other measures as noted above. We should focus on

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consolidating that progress and not continue to debate over a global NSA treaty whose achievement is not possible at the present time. Thus, the United States remains opposed to the negotiation of a global NSA treaty, or of an NSA protocol to the NPT". If this is so in the NPT context, what of the CD?

It is our honest desire to know what we, in the CD, are being asked to undertake as a viable, "deliberate" decision that led us to pose our basic question on 26 February.

In the absence of any discussion on any of these points, we note that the various proposals we have seen - that is, beyond the initial one of 2 March, which was subsequently changed in a way not responsive to any discussion of which we are aware - not only step over and around deliberate consideration of this topic, with the assistance of a special coordinator, but leap all the way forward to the establishment of an ad hoc committee.

On the basis of our assessment of global and regional realities, and of national and group positions, it seems to us that there is no chance of substantive progress on this file in the CD. We regret this. We may also be wrong. But we do firmly believe that the most responsible way forward, as with other issues before us, is for this body to appoint a special coordinator "to seek the views of its members on the most appropriate way to deal with the questions related to" this agenda item. Canada readily agrees to such a course of action.

Our view of the evolution of this file in the CD reminds us of E.M. Forster's line in his book Alexandria: A History and a Guide, in which he states: "As the minds of the Alexandrians decayed, their heresies became more and more technical". I apologize to Ambassador Zahran for reaching into his national history. We continue to think it would be unfortunate for this Conference to proceed as currently before us. But if we are advised by this Conference that there is, in fact, no interest in our questions or in exploring preliminary responses thereto, we will, of course, take into account the views of other members. Australia has a written assurance to that effect.

Mr. President, as always, we are ready to work closely and constructively with you and other delegations in an open and transparent way. We do wish to move forward the process of identifying areas in which work - discussion and negotiation - of real substance holds a hope for real progress. We look forward to working with other delegations to ensure that the CD is prepared to take deliberate decisions on priority issues. We have agreed and continue to agree to the appointment of special coordinators on the various agenda items discussed earlier. We are very close to agreement as regards agenda item 1, although we remain profoundly disturbed by the lack of any reference - however fleeting - to fissile material cut-off, a subject of earlier consensus in this Conference. And we firmly believe that we can move forward in a responsible, "deliberate" way as regards agenda item 4 on NSAs.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Arabic): I thank the representative of Canada, Ambassador Moher, for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. I have a request for the floor by the Ambassador of India.

Mrs. KUNADI (India): Allow me to express how pleased we are to see Syria, a country with which India enjoys close bilateral ties of friendship and cooperation, assume the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. Mr. President, you occupy this post at an important juncture in the work of the CD, and we are confident that with your diplomatic skills and competence, this Conference will embark on a course that will enable it to perform its functions, that is, begin multilateral negotiations on disarmament. I assure you of the full cooperation of my delegation in this endeavour. We would also like to place on record our sincere appreciation for the diligent and persistent efforts undertaken by Ambassador Hofer and the Swiss delegation to carry forward the work of the Conference.

We have listened with attention to the statement made by the distinguished Foreign Minister of Pakistan. It was not my intention to request the floor today. However, I am obliged to state the position of my delegation on certain points which have been raised by the Foreign Minister of Pakistan. It is a matter of great regret that he has sought to highlight issues in this forum which, if they are to be seriously addressed, belong to the bilateral discussion table of the Foreign Secretaries of India and Pakistan. When the Foreign-Secretary-level talks began in 1990, the Government of India had stated that it was willing to discuss all issues with a view to improving relations and resolving them bilaterally. It has always been our approach that sustained efforts are needed to reduce mistrust and generate confidence. Some progress in confidence-building has been made by putting into place agreements for non-attack on each other's nuclear facilities, the regular use of hotlines between the Directors General of military operations on both sides for pre-notification of troop movements and military manoeuvres and for preventing airspace violations. In addition, India has put forward a number of other proposals, which remain to be discussed. From time to time we have seen Pakistan placing preconditions at these talks, walking away from the table and then attempting to drum up support in international forums. This cannot be described as serious intent or a reflection of commitment to sustained and productive dialogue.

Confidence-building is not promoted by rhetoric and propaganda of an impending arms race or reiteration of impractical and insincere proposals, but rather by a willingness to work to discover areas of common interest. India remains committed to such a sustained and constructive dialogue at the Foreign Secretary level in order to explore initiatives that will enhance confidence and reduce misapprehensions and mistrust on both sides

A reference was made to Jammu and Kashmir, which is an integral part of India. It is a source of satisfaction for India and the international community that violence and terrorism instigated in Jammu and Kashmir have been brought under control through the determined efforts of the people and with the restoration of the democratic process. No doubt it has been a long-drawn-out process, and its success testifies to the resilience of the

(Mrs. Kunadi, India)

deep-rooted and well-established democratic political structures in India. The extent of interference from across the border is evident in the large quantities of illegal weapons that have been seized by our security forces. During the last five years, Indian security forces have recovered more than 18,500 AK guns, over 1,000 machine-guns, more than 700 rocket launchers, 18,000 kg of high explosives, 2.8 million rounds of ammunition, etc. Despite such provocation, India has not wavered in its commitment to maintaining the dialogue with Pakistan.

Reference has also been made in the statement by the Foreign Minister of Pakistan to India's missiles programme. India's missiles programme is not a secret or clandestine programme. It is an open programme. Its test flights are routinely announced in the media, as are decisions relating to further development, production and deployment. These decisions are taken in view of India's national security interests. On the other hand, we can hardly expect similar transparency on the part of a country whose programme is based on clandestine acquisitions and which to date, therefore, has neither been confirmed nor denied. We can understand Pakistan's compulsions and the fear of further sanctions which prevents it from being as transparent in this regard as India. But this cannot contribute to generating confidence.

It is also ironical that India's commitment to the Chemical Weapons Convention has been commented upon in this chamber, where India played a key role in bringing CWC negotiations to a successful conclusion in 1992. Our declarations have been complete and in keeping with our commitment to the CWC. We are an original signatory and an original State party. Many other countries who had declared their intention to be an original State party held back their ratifications. Our approach was to lead through example, and it is encouraging that Pakistan has followed us. We can only hope that Pakistan's declaration is made with the same degree of commitment as is reflected in the Indian declaration.

The CD is the sole multilateral negotiating forum for disarmament. I would recommend, therefore, that we focus on how to resolve the current impasse in this forum and leave Indo-Pakistani bilateral issues to the forum for which they are best suited, namely, dialogue at the bilateral level, which has been resumed last year.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Arabic): I thank the Ambassador of India for her statement and for the kind words she addressed to the Chair. I note also a request for the floor by the Ambassador of Pakistan. You have the floor, Sir.

Mr. AKRAM (Pakistan): Mr. President, my Foreign Minister has already had the opportunity to express our gratification at seeing you preside over this Conference. I wish to add my personal sense of gratification at seeing you in the Chair.

I have asked for the floor to respond to the statement which we have just heard from the distinguished representative of India. I am, of course, not surprised that the delegation of India would not wish the Conference on

(Mr. Akram, Pakistan)

Disarmament or, indeed, any other international body to consider its nuclear ambitions and its nuclear programme. It is a fact that the party which has assumed power today in New Delhi has declared that India will become a nuclear-weapon State. It has not said when it will do so, but it has declared, indeed, that India will become a nuclear-weapon State.

The question I wish to pose to this Conference is the following. If any other State in this Conference were to make the same declaration - Pakistan, Iran, Iraq, Syria - if any of these States were to make this declaration, what would be the reaction of the international community? What should be Pakistan's reaction? Should we say that we congratulate India on its nuclear ambitions, because it is going to break the monopoly of the five nuclear-weapon States? Is that the response that India expects from us and from the non-aligned world? What should Pakistan say when four to five Prithvi missiles, which we must presume now are nuclear-armed, are being produced and deployed each month along our borders? Should we say that this threat, which leave us three minutes to respond in case a missile is detected in flight, should we say that this is a contribution to international peace and security and to the preservation of stability in South Asia? We can't say that. What we can do is to inform the world community that this is a major threat to peace and security not only in South Asia but in the world.

Added to the fact that India is engaged in a brutal conflict eight years long in Kashmir, my colleague from India says that this conflict has come to an end. Well, if that is so, why are 600,000 Indian troops still in Kashmir? Why don't you withdraw them if the situation has been normalized? Why do you need these troops to coerce the Kashmiris to the ballot box, to impose your so-called democracy on Kashmir? Kashmir has not been solved. The people are totally alienated from India. They want their right to self-determination and, God willing, they will get that right, and until they do, Pakistan will support their struggle from freedom.

But what should this Conference do in the face of a declaration by one State that it will acquire nuclear weapons? What we would suggest to this Conference for its consideration is to issue a declaration, a declaration denouncing this policy and urging the new Government of India to reconsider its position, and to assure the world that it will not develop, and not deploy, nuclear weapons. We believe that this would be the appropriate response of this body, and of the international community, if it is genuinely interested in non-proliferation on a universal basis and not on a selective basis. We ask this of the Conference, knowing full well, of course, that such a decision is subject to a veto, the Indian veto, and this body knows full well the Indian veto which was exercised against the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty.

My colleague has spoken about confidence-building measures. We have concluded confidence-building measures. The joint declaration of 1992 on chemical weapons was also supposed to be a confidence-building measure. It was violated with total and full impunity by the Government of India, and there was no response from the international community. That is the sad part, and that is what Pakistan must take into account, that we are subjected to

(Mr. Akram, Pakistan)

double standards. And the distinguished representative of India has the temerity to crow over that double standard when she says that her missile programme is open and Pakistan's is not. She knows why not. But that does not mean that we shall leave unanswered the capabilities that we face. We will provide a matching response and, if the world wishes to contain proliferation in South Asia, it must stop India, not Pakistan.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Arabic): I thank the Ambassador of Pakistan. Does any other delegation wish to take the floor? I see no requests for the floor.

The task of reaching consensus on our programme of work is proceeding in an encouraging manner, thanks to the untiring efforts made by my predecessors Ambassadors Norberg of Sweden and Hofer of Switzerland, and taking into consideration as well the collective willingness shared by all members of the Conference to embark on substantive work. The informal consultations we held last Friday have in my view provided a solid foundation for the emergence of an agreement in this regard. It is my intention to preserve and build upon the momentum gained during the last few weeks. The broad areas of convergence of views, as well as a few remaining outstanding issues, have been clearly identified, and all my efforts in the coming days will be geared towards overcoming the difficulties in close consultation with all interested delegations. I will share with you the outcome of my endeavours at the earliest opportunity, so that we may be in a position to take a decision on our programme of work as soon as possible.

If there are no further requests for the floor, I shall conclude our business for today with a reminder that the next plenary meeting of the Conference will be held on Thursday, 26 March 1998 at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.